

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 21 of First Extraordinary Session

By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Ms. Carol Lynn Yellin of Memphis.

WHEREAS, it was with great sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly and the citizens of our state learned of the death of Ms. Carol Lynn Yellin; and

WHEREAS, Carol Lynn Yellin was a distinguished and prominent citizen of the state of Tennessee who was wholly dedicated to her profession, the greater Memphis community, and her family; and

WHEREAS, she devoted her life to empowering and achieving equality for all women; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Yellin enjoyed a long, successful career as a writer, editor, and activist that produced six books, a *Reader's Digest* condensation of the Bible, a Pulitzer Prize nomination, numerous magazine articles, and the definitive archive of the Memphis sanitation workers' strike housed at the University of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, an Oklahoma native, Carol earned a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University in 1941 and a master's degree in journalism in 1942; and

WHEREAS, in the same year that she earned her master's degree, Ms. Yellin landed a prominent editorial assistant position with *Reader's Digest*; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, she honorably served in the American Red Cross in Saipan from 1944 to 1945; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Carol married theater producer and broadcaster, David Yellin; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Yellin moved to Memphis, Tennessee in 1964 when her husband accepted a job offer in the growing Southern city; and

WHEREAS, even though she had moved to Memphis, she continued to work for *Reader's Digest* as a special projects editor for *Reader's Digest* Condensed Books; a position that afforded her the opportunity to be one of eight editors chosen to work on the condensed Bible; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Yellin became a staunch civil rights activist in the Sixties shortly after moving to Memphis, when she joined the Saturday Lunch Club, a group of black and white women who tested integration laws by meeting in public; and

WHEREAS, she eloquently co-authored a book that was nominated for the highly coveted Pulitzer Prize in 1965; it detailed the unique school system that developed for black students in Prince Edward County of Virginia after public schools were abandoned in 1959; and

WHEREAS, within a few days of the April 4, 1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination, Carol and her husband formed the Memphis Search for Meaning Committee, which worked for five years to produce the archive of the sanitation workers' strike, the monumental event that instigated the assassination on King's life; and

WHEREAS, the Yellins also co-produced a weekly television discussion show, "Face to Face"; and

WHEREAS, for her diligent and tireless efforts during and after the Civil Rights Movement, Ms. Yellin received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Human Rights Award from the Memphis State University in 1988, now called the University of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, following in the footsteps of the early suffragists and pioneering modern feminists, she was a major force in preserving the history about Tennessee's pivotal role in the passage of the 19th Amendment with original research; and

WHEREAS, she co-authored with Dr. Janann Sherman the definitive book about Tennessee's role in her final book, *The Perfect 36: Tennessee Delivers Woman Suffrage*, with copies donated to every school, library, and college in the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, she coordinated pro-equality luncheons and helped organize a citywide celebration of the anniversary of women's suffrage during the Equal Rights Amendment ratifying campaign; and

WHEREAS, she edited the 1977 book, *Tennessee Women, Past and Present*, in addition to penning an article on the suffrage movement for *American Heritage* magazine that is regarded as source material by scholars; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Ms. Yellin assisted in establishing an organization that recognizes local women for their work in bringing about change in the community called Women of Achievement; and

WHEREAS, she was also an active member of Network, a Memphis-based professional women's organization, and helped organize the Economic Justice for Women Coalition, which she astutely served with great distinction as its President in 1986-1987; and

WHEREAS, because of her "tremendous achievements for women," Ms. Yellin was the deserving recipient of the Women of Achievement Vision Award in 1989, won the Women on Communications Headliner Award in 1991, and was appointed to Woman Suffrage 75, Inc. in 1994; and

WHEREAS, Carol Lynn also peerlessly served on the Friends of the Library board; and

WHEREAS, Carol Lynn Yellin faithfully worshiped as an active member of the Neshoba Unitarian Universalist Church; and

WHEREAS, the legacy Ms. Yellin leaves behind will be fondly remembered and greatly treasured by friends and associates for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, Carol enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband of almost 49 years, David Yellin, and was the proud mother of Chuck Yellin of Israel; Tom Yellin, an executive producer of ABC News in New York; and Doug Yellin, head of production at Iwerks

Entertainment in Los Angeles and Emily Yellin, a Memphis based freelance writer who covers the Mid-South for the *New York Times*; and

WHEREAS, Carol was also delighted and thrilled by her four grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, it is highly appropriate that this legislative body should pause in its deliberations to remember the exemplary life of this fine Tennessean; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Carol Lynn Yellin, remembering with admiration her exemplary character and her many selfless contributions to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy and extend our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Ms. Carol Lynn Yellin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.